MUP Program Overview

MUP Program Components

The Master of Urban Planning curriculum is organized into five major components:

1. A **Core of six required courses** covering fundamental knowledge needed for practice in the field of planning;

2. Recommended **Concentrations**, which are intended to help students develop specialized expertise in one or more areas of professional practice;

3. A required **Capstone Project or Thesis** through which students demonstrate individual professional competence. The Capstone also provides students with an opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom to a real-world planning problem or issue.

4. An **Internship** (highly recommended, but not required) in the summer between years 1 and 2 of the program, in which students gain professional experience.

5. **Electives**, from among the rich offerings of the entire campus.

Basic Requirements

To qualify for the MUP degree, each student must complete all required **core courses**, the capstone seminar and capstone project/thesis. Students must also satisfy one of the following:

- A total of **60 earned hours**, if a zero credit internship course (UP 590) is successfully completed. At least 40 of the 60 hours must be in UP courses.

- A total of **64 earned hours**, if no internship course is completed. At least 40 of the 64 hours must be in UP courses.

- A total of **32 earned hours of UP courses**, if the student is in the law or architecture joint degree programs.

- A total of **40 earned hours of UP courses**, if the student is individually approved for a joint degree in a field other than law or architecture.

- A total of **32 earned hours**, if the student was admitted to the 4+1 program while a UIUC undergraduate. At least 20 of the 32 hours must be in UP courses.

For all MUP students, at least 16 of their earned hours must be at the 500 level, and 12 of those 16 hours must be in UP courses. Note that, in all cases, 32 hours is the absolute minimum required by the Graduate College.
The MUP Core (24 hours)

The MUP core is intended to convey the common base of knowledge required for creative and effective professional practice in the field of planning. The core introduces students to: theoretical and interpretive views of human settlement from several disciplinary perspectives; the history of the planning discipline and key theories of planning; the legal, political, and organizational context of planning in the U.S.; tools and practical skills planners need to understand urban and regional trends and analyze planning problems. Most field courses in the department build on the base of knowledge provided in the core. The following are the six core courses taken over three semesters:

**Year 1 (Fall and Spring Semesters)**
- UP 503 Physical Planning (4 hours)
- UP 504 Urban History and Theory (4 hours)
- UP 505 Urban and Regional Analysis (4 hours)
- UP 510 Plan Making (4 hours)
- UP 511 Law and Planning (4 hours)

**Year 2 (Fall Semester)**
- UP 501 Planning History and Theory (4 hours)

Concentration

Students are strongly encouraged to develop a depth of specialized expertise in one or more subfields of planning. The concentrations are recommended sets of field courses that are designed to provide such expertise. They are essentially advising guidelines: students are not formally required to demonstrate that they have completed all courses in a given concentration.

Transnational Planning Stream

The transnational planning stream is a set of courses, study abroad options, and project-based learning opportunities designed to help MUP students better understand trends in globalization; international linkages among U.S. cities, regions, and populations; and major international planning and development issues. The stream is not intended to be a separate concentration; instead, it is designed to help students design a program that joins the specialized expertise of a concentration with a rich understanding of international and transnational issues.

Capstone Project/Thesis

For the capstone, students may choose to complete a project (8 hours), workshop (8 hours), or thesis (8 hours). The capstone is completed in the second year. Students must also enroll in a two semester, 0-hour Capstone Seminar course (UP 591) during the second year.

Professional Internship (UP 590)

All students are encouraged to complete a planning internship, especially if they do not have prior professional experience in the field. The internship must be preceded and succeeded by at least one semester of course work in planning while in residence at the University of Illinois.